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imposed himself. He did not do so with any severity, however, as parents are usually "afraid of their children", fearing that if they are too strict, they will not be well treated by them later, when they themselves have to go into the *k'hang-gu*.

I enquired who it was who gave the children their sex education. The answer was that nobody did. Parents are forbidden by custom to speak to them of such things, and they have to pick up what they can learn from playmates. Another source of information was watching animals, it seemed, and everyone agreed that they *may* learn something from witnessing their parents' behaviour during the long winter nights in the *Jan-sa*. Anyhow, they "somehow" knew about sex by the time they were approximately six years of age.

Sexual games between children, as well as masturbation, were very severely punished if discovered by the parents. The father would beat a child caught playing with itself or attempting coitus with another child. Mothers, it seemed, did not beat, but pinched instead, and this could be made very unpleasant for the victim. It was impressed upon me that if a child was a favourite, it might be dealt with more leniently, and that no attempt to deal out punishment equally was made.

In very small children, masturbation was repressed by attempts to frighten the child. It would be told by its mother that a sort of witch called a *baghzi* (a Hindu name?) would come and either carry the child away, or cut off its ears and put them in a leather bag which the creature carried expressly for the purpose of collecting the ears of bad children. No threat was ever made that the genital organs of the child would be cut off, and the idea that this might be said seemed utterly fantastic to my informants. As a sign of the times, I heard that children were also threatened with being carried off by Tungan robbers (these were Chinese Moslems from Sinkiang who, in 1938, had just been chased out of Turkestan by Soviet troops, and had escaped Southwards, over the Karakorum pass; they stayed in Leh for some time before being repatriated by sea to China by the Government of India).

When children were between six and seven years old, their formal education began. They were taught to read and write Tibetan by qualified teachers, usually lamas, for about one year. Most of the teaching consisted in getting the pupil to learn long texts by heart and reciting them, in the very early morning. Corporal punishment was administered if the lesson was not learned properly. When the year was up, more practical things were taught, such as agriculture and the traditional ways in which crops are grown in Ladak. Pastoral duties were also inculcated into future herdsmen at this time, while others learned a trade.